Friend of Oswalds Knew Mrs. Kennedy

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 23—A colorful Russian-born society figure and business promoter has emerged, as the result of several extraordinary coincidences, as the only known link between the family of President Kennedy and his assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald.

Testimony by George S. de Mohrenschildt before the Warren Commission brought out that he knew Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy, the former Jacqueline Bouvier, as a little girl on Long Island in 1938, remained her mother's friend over the ensuing years and became a friend and protector of Oswald and his wife, Marina, in Texas 24 years later.

Another coincidence was that about the time he met the Oswalds in 1962, Mrs. Kennedy had agreed to become the honorary chairman of a foundation to combat cystic fibrosis that Mr. de Mohrenschildt had established in memory of his late son.

The report of the Warren Commission, published last Sept. 27, said that "extensive investigation had been conducted into the background" of Mr. de Mohrenschildt and his present and fourth wife, the former Jeanne Fomenko, who was born in China of Russian parents. No reason for the inquiry was offered in the report, however.

However, it said that "the commission's investigation has developed no signs of subversive or disloyal conduct on the part of either of the de Mohrenschildts" and that "neither the F.B.I., C.I.A., nor any witness contacted by the commission has provided any information linking the de Mohrenschildts to subversive or extremist organizations." "Nor," the report states, "has there been any evidence linking them in any way with the assassination of President Kennedy."

Was a French Agent

Mr. de Mohrenschildt acknowledged to the commission that during World War II he worked in the United States "on behalf of the French intelligence," but denied that he had illegally sketched Coast Guard installations in Texas then.

Although the commission's report made no reference to the coincidence of Mr. de Mohrenschildt's association with Mrs. Kennedy's mother and later with the Oswalds, its interest in the 53-year-old oilman and promoter was shown in the fact that 118 pages of testimony in the hearings released today dealt with his interrogation and 46 pages with the questioning of his wife. This is one of the longest sections of individual testimony in the 26 volumes of the hearings.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt testified that he met Mrs. John V. Bouvier 3d at Belport, L. I., shortly after his arrival in the United States in 1938, when he worked as a perfume salesman in New York.

"Mrs. Bouvier is Jacqueline Kennedy's mother, also her father and her whole family," he testified. "She was in the process of getting a divorce from her husband. I met him also. We were very close friends. We saw each other every day. I met Jackie, then, when she was a little girl; her sister, who was still in the cradle practically. We were also very close friends of Jack Bouvier's sister, and his father."

Mr. de Mohrenschildt told the commission that his friendship with Mrs. Kennedy's mother — now Mrs. Hugh D. Auchincloss —"more or less remained, because we still see each other, occasionally."

He Noted Coincidence

Exhibits appended to the commission's hearings show that following President Kennedy's assassination, Mr. de Mohrenschildt wrote Mrs. Auchincloss deploring the event and pointing to the strange coincidence of having known both Mrs. Kennedy and her husband's assassin.

The letter was written on Dec. 12, 1963, from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, where Mr. de Mohrenschildt now lives and has a series of business ventures in which he is associated with the Government of President François Duvalier.

He asked Mrs. Auchincloss to express "my deepest sympathy to your daughter and tell her that both my brother and I will always remember her as a charming little girl from East Hampton."

"Since we lived in Dallas permanently last year and before," he wrote, "we had the misfortune to have met Oswald and especially his wife Marina sometime last fall. Both my wife and I tried to help poor Marina who could not speak any English, was mistreated by her husband; she and the baby were malnurished [sic] and sickly. We took them to the hospital."

"I was just sitting in my office thinking of the strange fate which made me know Jackie when she was a little girl—and which made me also know the assassin (or presumed assassin), his wife and child," he wrote.

Reply Was Sent

Mrs. Auchincloss replied, thanking him for his letter, and remarking that "it seems extraordinary to me that you knew Oswald and that you knew Jackie as a child."

"It is certainly a very stange world," she wrote.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt testified that after he and his wife had befriended the Oswalds in Dallas, he once told Oswald that "I met Mrs. Kennedy when she was a child, you know, that she was a very strong-willed child, very intelligent and very attractive child you see, and a very attractive family, and I thought that Kennedy was doing a very good job with regard to the racial problem, you know."

"And he also agreed with me," Mr. de Mohrenschildt testified. "Yes, yes, yes; I think it is an excellent President, young full of energy, full of good ideas."

"He was an admirer of President Kennedy," he said.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt's testimony showed that the Oswalds became friends of Mr. de Mohrenschildt and of other Russian-born persons in Dallas after their arrival in Texas, even though they were socially and economically below that group.